

on the 8th of the present month. Retribution has followed swift and implacable, like a Greek Fate, on one of the most sensational crimes of recent times. Crippen planned and executed his crime like an expert, but the criminal is generally vulnerable at some point. In Crippen's case it was the interment of the remains of his wife in the cellar of his own house. Circumstantial evidence of the most convincing kind satisfied the judge and the jury that the remains were those of Crippen's wife, and that he had murdered her. The Court was presided over by Chief Justice Alverstone. The speeches of counsel on both sides were restrained by the decorum of an English court-room, and were confined strictly within the sphere of legitimate evidence. The Lord Chief Justice analyzed Crippen's story with what is said to have been masterly skill, and closed by declaring that, if Crippen was guilty, he was an extraordinary man who had committed a ghastly crime and attempted to conceal it in the most brutal manner; and if innocent, it was impossible to fathom his mind. The lying letters sent out by Crippen to various persons announcing the departure, illness, and death of his wife were characterized by the Lord Chief Justice as the most remarkable set of statements that had ever come under his notice. The self-control of Crippen was as notable as his brutality and ingenuity. His conviction was apparently a triumph of the common sense of a resolute judge, discarding pure technicalities and going straight to the heart of the matter. The young woman who accompanied Crippen on his flight to Canada, and who wore the jewelry of his murdered wife, was tried as an accessory, and at the end of less than six hours was acquitted. When one compares the dignity and celerity of this trial with the appalling waste of time and money in the Thaw trial and the flooding of this country with indecent testimony, most of which was irrelevant, the necessity of reforming our criminal procedure becomes strikingly manifest.

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SIAM Last week there passed away Chulalongkorn, King of Siam. He was not a well-known monarch, because Siam is not a well-known country. Yet

he did a great deal for his country during his long reign of forty-two years, a reign exceeded among living rulers only by those of Austria-Hungary, Rumania, Greece, and Japan. When the King came to the throne, Siam was not a half-civilized State, but during the four decades it may be said to have become more than half-civilized. The executive power, once exercised by the King only, is now exercised by him under the advisement of a Cabinet consisting of the heads of the various departments of the Government, and also by a Legislative Council of forty members, composed of the Ministers of State and others appointed by the Crown. The introduction of many American and European ideas into the Government has been due to the astuteness of the monarch in calling to his counsel an American General Adviser, a British Judicial Adviser, a French Legislative Adviser, and a Japanese Legal Adviser. The work of these agents has been specially noted in the progress made in the administration of justice in the native courts and in the International Court which tries suits of foreigners against natives, in the completion of a penal code, and in the progress made in the framing of other codes. A transformation has also taken place in the police force under the superintendence of English police officers loaned by the Government of India. The financial position of the country has become very favorable, the expenditures being less than the revenue, which is steadily increasing. Most notable of all improvements, however, was the King's decree, ten years ago, liberating the slaves. The oppressive system of forced labor has now been mitigated by the substitution of a police tax. The commercial position of Siam has also become notable. Its chief produce and the staple article of its export is rice. Next in importance comes teakwood, the cutting of which is a great industry; all upper Siam consists of dense forests. The accounts of the country written by those who saw it a quarter of a century ago must now be modified, for railways and tramways, telegraphs and telephones, have been introduced, and Siam is an example to many other more civilized nations by reason of the introduction of a parcels post service. Though the coun-

try's area is no longer as vast as it once was, by reason of the aggressions of France from Anam on the east and of Great Britain from Burma on the west, the area is still very considerable, amounting to about two hundred thousand square miles—half-way between the areas of California and Texas—in which nearly seven million people find a more or less easy livelihood, one which comports well with their traditional light-heartedness and gaiety. Americans have a special interest in the Siamese, not only because the late Edward Henry Strobel was for many years the trusted General Adviser for the Siamese King, but also because of the gratifying progress made by our religious missions in the country. The Presbyterian missions, in particular, have been so strong that the name of their college at Chiangmai was, at the Crown Prince's suggestion, changed to the Prince Royal College. Both the King and his son have been liberal contributors to these institutions. The son, Prince Chowfa Maha Vajiravudh, is now King. It is believed that he will prove his father's worthy successor.

**THE AUSTRALIAN
OLD AGE PENSION
SYSTEM EXTENDED**

Two of the Australian States, New South Wales and Victoria, had old age pension systems before the Commonwealth of Australia came into existence in 1900. In July, 1909, a Federal system of old age pensions came into operation, with a maximum rate of ten shillings a week. To qualify for a pension a man or woman had to be over sixty-five years of age, and resident in Australia for a period of not less than twenty-five years. The Federal law was enacted during the Deakin or Fusionist administration—the administration that came into existence and was supported by both Liberals and Conservatives with a view to keeping the Labor party out of power. At the last general election, however, the Labor party was returned with majorities in both the House of Representatives and the Senate; and one of the first acts of the Fisher Government has been to extend the pension system. This can be done by order-in-council; but it is necessary, of course, that Parliament should sanction the additional expenditure that any change in the

pension system may involve. For the first year of the Federal system—July, 1909, to July, 1910—the cost was £1,500,000. At the end of July last the Government asked for a vote of £2,200,000; and with this granted by Parliament the age at which women become eligible for pensions has been reduced to sixty years; and pensions are also to be paid under certain conditions to women and men who are invalids before they reach the age of sixty and sixty-five. Under the British system the maximum pension is five shillings a week, and men and women are not eligible until they reach the age of seventy. The Fisher Government has also repealed the law which provided for a loan of £3,500,000 for naval defenses. Naval defense is not to be neglected; but the policy of the Labor Government is to pay as it goes, and meet all expenditure on defense out of revenue. Another measure to which the Fisher Government is committed is one which provides that, if a manufacturer receives advantages from the high protectionist tariff of the Commonwealth, he must share this advantage with his work-people in the way of higher wages and better working conditions, or the output of his factory will be charged with an excise duty equivalent to the import duty on similar goods coming from abroad. The incoming of the Labor Ministry has occasioned few apprehensions in Australia. It was heartily welcomed by the "Church Commonwealth," one of the organs of the Episcopal Church in Melbourne, on the ground that while Mr. Alfred Deakin, the defeated Premier, had always commanded respect as "a dreamer of dreams," "many of his supporters were simply professional politicians—men without enthusiasm and without character." This was written in May last, just after the Deakin or Fusionist Ministry had been overwhelmed at the polls. There had apparently been little change in popular feeling as regards the Fisher Ministry by the end of July; for the Melbourne correspondent of the Glasgow "Herald," one of the foremost of British Conservative journals, then reported that there was every likelihood that the Labor party would be in control for six years—practically for the full lifetime of the present Federal Parliament.